

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

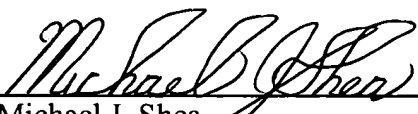
Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claims 14 and 15 contain allowable subject matter. The subject matter of claim 14 has been incorporated into independent claim 10 and claim 14 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Conforming amendments have been made to claim 10 and claim 15. Based on these amendments, claims 10-13 and 15-18 are believed to be allowable.

The features of allowable claim 14 have also been incorporated into independent claims 1, 8 and 9. Consequently, these claims are now also believed to be allowable. Claims 3-7 depend from claim 1 and are also believed to be allowable.

The above amendments are not believed to raise any new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. Moreover, by incorporating allowable subject matter into each of the independent claims, this entire application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Thus, entry of the amendments is believed to be appropriate and is respectfully requested.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: 
Michael J. Shea
Reg. No. 34,725

MJS:mjs
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100